

BEFORE THE TENNESSEE REGULATORY AUTHORITY

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

September 29, 2003

IN RE:

**PETITION FOR APPROVAL OF
INTERCONNECTION AGREEMENT
AND AMENDMENT THERETO
BETWEEN TDS TELECOM AND
US LEC OF TENNESSEE INC.**

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**DOCKET NO.
03-00415**

**ORDER APPROVING INTERCONNECTION AGREEMENT
AND FIRST AMENDMENT THERETO**

This matter came before Chairman Deborah Taylor Tate, Director Pat Miller and Director Ron Jones of the Tennessee Regulatory Authority (the "Authority" or "TRA"), the voting panel assigned to this docket, at a regularly scheduled Authority Conference held on September 8, 2003, to consider, pursuant to 47 U.S.C. § 252, the Petition for approval of the interconnection agreement and first amendment thereto negotiated between Concord Telephone Exchange, Inc., Tennessee Telephone Company, Humphreys County Telephone Company and Tellico Telephone Company, Inc. (collectively "TDS TELECOM") and US LEC of Tennessee Inc. The interconnection agreement was filed on June 24, 2003, and the first amendment¹ was filed on August 18, 2003.

¹ The first amendment is the Disaster Recovery Plan filed by TDS TELECOM.

Based upon a review of the agreement and first amendment, the record in this matter, and the standards for review set forth in 47 U.S.C. § 252, the Directors unanimously granted the Petition and made the following findings and conclusions:

1) The Authority has jurisdiction over public utilities pursuant to Tenn. Code Ann. § 65-4-104.

2) The agreement and the amendment are in the public interest as they provide consumers with alternative sources of telecommunications services within the service area of TDS TELECOM.

3) The agreement and the amendment are not discriminatory to telecommunications service providers that are not parties thereto.

4) 47 U.S.C. § 252(e)(2)(A) provides that a state commission may reject a negotiated agreement only if it “discriminates against a telecommunications carrier not a party to the agreement” or if the implementation of the agreement “is not consistent with the public interest, convenience or necessity.” Unlike arbitrated agreements, a state commission may not reject a negotiated agreement on the grounds that the agreement fails to meet the requirements of 47 U.S.C. §§ 251 or 252(d).² Thus, although the Authority finds that neither ground for rejection of a negotiated agreement exists, this finding should not be construed to mean that the agreement and the amendment are consistent with §§ 251 or 252(d) or, for that matter, previous Authority decisions.

5) No person or entity has sought to intervene in this docket.

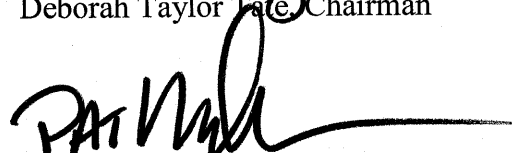
6) The agreement and the amendment are reviewable by the Authority pursuant to 47 U.S.C. § 252 and Tenn. Code Ann. § 65-4-104.

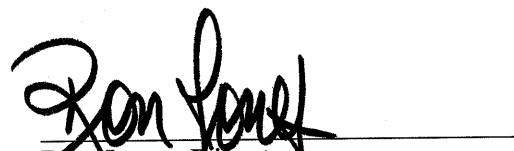
² See 47 U.S.C. § 252(e)(2)(B).

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED THAT:

The Petition is granted, and the interconnection agreement and first amendment thereto negotiated between Concord Telephone Exchange, Inc., Tennessee Telephone Company, Humphreys County Telephone Company and Tellico Telephone Company, Inc. (collectively "TDS TELECOM") and US LEC of Tennessee Inc. are approved and are subject to the review of the Authority as provided herein.


Deborah Taylor Tate, Chairman


Pat Miller, Director


Ron Jones, Director